1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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ceremony; I found no case in which any widow had married a man who was not her dead husband's brother (or parallel-cousin). Indeed, owing to the distances between Hill Maria villages and the fact that in nearly all of them the men are all of one clan, irregular marriages are far less common there than in the mixed-clan villages of the Bison-horn Marias. Among the latter the second husband has sometimes to compensate the dead husband's parents in part for the bride-price paid by them when their son married the widow, as well as compensating their younger son, if any. Sometimes the widow and second husband sit side by side on stools, the widow wearing a new cloth and new ornaments, and near relatives put marks on their foreheads with oil and turmeric. There is also sometimes a ceremony to transfer the widow from the clan of her former to that of her new husband; two pieces of grass are placed together in the form of a cross to represent a man, and this cross is separated from another by a knife. Two leaf-cups are filled with water, and three times water is poured from one into the other. The two grass crosses representing the two husbands are sprinkled thrice with the water, and then the heads of the crosses are plunged together first into one cup and then into the other. The knife is regarded as the witness of this transfer of the woman from one clan to the other. When a woman elopes from one husband to another, there is sometimes a similar reconciliation ceremony between the two men after the new husband has obeyed the *panchayat's* decision as to the compensation to be paid to the first husband; their four hands are placed together, and water is poured thrice over them.

It has been seen that women not only have practically free choice among the Hill Marias and considerable choice among the Bison-horn Marias as to their husbands, and that among the latter a woman frequently goes off to a new husband if she wants to. This is practically all that there is in the way of divorce, the position being regularized by the *panchayat* insisting on the new husband paying the appropriate compensation, which is generally only the bride-price paid for the woman at her original marriage. The children, if any, remain in the father's custody, since they belong to his clan. Women often desert their first husband if they have no children and consider his sterility the cause. Physical revulsion from an abnormality is another known cause; a Kuruk Maria fishing girl in the Behra Mar hill *pargana* ran away from a husband with a withered leg, which she said had been wasted away by an angry demon (*ras*), and despite her father's and brother's entreaties to her not to put them to the expense of having to refund to her husband the heavy bride-price of Rs. 70 that he had paid them for her, absolutely refused to return. Hare-lipped men seem to have

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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586 732 no difficulty in getting wives to stay with them. Dwarfs, on the other hand, not only find it hard to get wives except their elder brothers' widows, but are passed over in the succession to a post of responsibility or the management of a family. Madness is particularly dreaded, and would certainly involve the elopement of a wife. But husbands, though they would divorce a mad [833] woman *a thoro*, would still maintain them; sexual intercourse with a mad woman is believed to result in complete loss of virility. 586 I have heard of no case in which a husband has divorced his wife; she may be frigid or barren or in other ways unsatisfactory, but so long as she is not unfaithful her husband is expected to maintain her, and his remedy is to seek another co-wife, often getting her younger sister or parallel-cousin as compensation for her falling [674] short of expectations. The murder of wives in sudden fits of temper for petty shortcomings is unfortunately common among the Bison-horn Marias, though almost unknown in the hills. Nor must it [837] be assumed that because Bison-horn wives often elope, their husbands tamely submit to infidelity; the detection of an intrigue often results in the husband killing the wife or her paramour, though once a wife has made good her escape to another man's house the [593] husband usually accepts the *fait accompli*. The beating or ill-treatment of wives is strongly condemned by all Marias.[a]

[a] [See cat. 116, p. 425, – Analyst]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COURSE OF MURIA LIFE: CHILDHOOD

I. Pregnancy and Birth

[524] *Burka ta jāwa undāna bedur gatta te mak dāyna. It drinks gruel from a gourd, but hides among the bamboos.* A baby, drinking at the breast and swinging in a bamboo basket.—Muria riddle

842 PREGNANCY so dreaded in the ghotul is desired at home. Sterility does not seem to be very common—out of the 2000 cases studied only 150 were childless—but a married couple without children are always miserable.

The Muria attribute sterility to various causes. One is a purely physical one. 'I have no child', said the Chalki of Korenda, 'though I go to my wife every day. There may be plenty of rain, but unless there is warmth in the ground to help the seed to grow, there is no harvest.' A former Sirdar of Pupgaon attributed his sterility to the fact that 'perhaps I do not know how to copulate properly'. Wives sometimes say their childlessness is because their husbands have 'wasted all their seed by scattering it in the ghotul fields'.

842 789 Others give a supernatural reason. At a marriage a witch may slip some evil magic into the bride's dress or hair when she puts tika on her forehead. A jealous motiari whose 'husband' has been married to another girl may perform spells to stop her supplanter from realizing the fullest joys of marriage. The Constable of Modenar said that Mayakaka Deo or Kondi Deo was the cause of the trouble. 'He stopped my wife having a child for four years. Then we promised him a pig, a goat and five chickens and a child was born.'

842 578 [586] Sterility is always a cause of quarrels and disagreements in the home. Husband and wife each accuse the other of being at fault. A former Sirdar of Sodma said, 'We went to each other for seven years till we were weary, and still there was no child; every time my wife's period began, she abused me saying, "Are you a man? Haven't you any strength?" And I used to feel miserable and ashamed.' On the other hand, out of the 2000 marriages examined, none of the few divorces were attributed to this cause.

843 A girl is born in nine months, a boy in ten. 'A girl takes a great deal out of the mother.' Yet women love suffering—*godan* (tattooing), *chodan* (intercourse), and *paidan* (child-bearing). But Muria men seem to do all they can to spare the mother. During pregnancy intercourse must cease after the fifth month. Intercourse is not generally resumed for a year after child-birth, for 'if you sow seed in wet ground, a harvest is certain' and it is important to space confinements properly. After a year, 'when the wife feels an itching for it, she herself goes to lie with her husband'. But in some places, in Alor and Berma for example, I was told that intercourse began again after six months, and at Kabonga that 'a man goes to his wife when their child first smiles'. But most Muria regard a woman as physically unattractive during the puerperium. 'Her breasts and privates are *gilgila*: who would care for them? But once the child can walk, the mother is again lovely in our eyes.'

843 844 In Masora I was given a catalogue of the various kinds of birth and it is interesting to note that these are largely based on the spacing of confinements. The Sambhar Birth occurs after a space of three years and the child is strong and healthy. The Tiger Birth also comes after three years to a woman of

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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of a chelik's absence from the ghotul to seduce his motiari. These things happen, but they are condemned. 883X

The chelik themselves consider that this type of ghotul has several great advantages. The first, characteristically, is the very practical one that if a girl becomes pregnant 'they know the thief'. Elsewhere it is naturally often difficult to fix the responsibility of fatherhood. Again, the chelik say that a great deal of trouble is saved. 'We know what to do; there is no jealousy or dispute; everything is settled, and there is no more to be said.' I think it is true that there is less strain and anxiety in these ghotul; and there is room for the development of deep intimacy and romantic attachment. In the pre-nuptial period, however, it may be argued that these things are not altogether desirable. 836

They certainly lead to greater conflict with the parents over marriage. Many chelik and motiari look forward with misery to separation from the partner who has shared with them the happy days of youth, and occasionally—but only occasionally—ghotul partners elope together rather than face a separation. Statistics here are striking. Out of the 2000 marriages examined, 1684 were celebrated according to the wishes of the parents and the great majority of cases were of the cross-cousin type. Of the 116 irregular marriages, 77 were those of chelik who married their 'ghotul-wives'. Only 39 irregular marriages were reported from the other type of ghotul. In view of the smaller number of men from the *jodidār* ghotul, these figures indicate a proportion of about 1 in every 9 of chelik in this type of ghotul who had conflict with their parents, and only 1 in about 32 from the other type of ghotul. 883X 836 583

Of those who married their 'ghotul-wives', 9 out of 77 divorced them later, giving a proportion of 11·6 per cent against a proportion of 2·9 per cent of divorces for the whole 2000 marriages. It is interesting that the proportion of divorces among Lamhada—the other type of chelik who live in close contact with their future wives before marriage—is almost exactly the same, 11·5 per cent. And although 77 and 113 cases respectively are not sufficient for us to draw far-reaching conclusions, it is undoubtedly striking that there should be so high an incidence of divorce among these and only among these two classes of people. 883X 836 586

Yet even though a passionate ghotul attachment is not the best preparation for a life-long union, at the time separation seems tragic indeed. A girl especially, whose chelik marries someone else, is a pathetic figure. 'Her life has left her'—so they put it in Munjmeta—'she lies alone on her mat and pines for him; she has no heart to take another lover.' Often she sleeps with a girl-friend who is herself in the arms of a boy, but she lies with her back to them, turning away from all that happiness. In Ulera they said that when a girl's lover leaves her, she cannot sing for many days. When the Mukhwan of Banjora died, the Mukhwanin's face was 'destroyed by sorrow'. 883X 836 152

Boys are often, but not always, more philosophical. 'Yes, for a month you feel wretched', said a chelik in Markabera. 'Then you forget all about it. One may be able to meet her again, but that is difficult and dangerous. But at least you can always get another girl in the ghotul.' Yet at Bopna the Silledar was called a 'widower', so miserable was he after his 'wife's' marriage last year. At Markabera, Dasru took to drink after his ghotul wife was married and Gurti, who was deeply attached to the beautiful and vivacious Malko, looked very lonely and miserable when I saw him nearly a year after her marriage to a boy in another village.

It is remarkable, however, how few actual tragedies there have been from this cause. In the last ten years, only one case of suicide has been registered 883X 836 762

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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regard it as a mere preparation; the ghotul is the school of marriage, a training-ground of the domestic virtues. 'When a girl learns to keep the ghotul clean, she will keep her husband's house clean; the boy who is taught to bring wood and work hard will do the same in his own house.'

Still more important, the ghotul exercises its members in the sexual arts and virtues. In other 'higher' societies, how many lives have been ruined on the marriage night![1] But when a newly-married Muria husband and wife approach each other, they are already sexually educated, graduates in the technique of love, instinctively able to avoid the dangers into which untried partners so easily fall. The agony of defloration is divorced from marriage; the hymen casts no shadow across its consummation. The husband is not likely to be repelled by frigidity or shocked by dispareunia—an experience which might later make him impotent. Not a little of the serenity and stability of Muria marriage is due to the fact that when husband and wife cross its threshold they are both prepared.

II. The Appeal of the Childhood Friend

But though the ghotul is a school of marriage, it is not a place for experimental marriages. According to Muria tradition a chelik should never marry his ghotul partner, and once a boy and girl are betrothed they are separated in the ghotul by the strictest of taboos.

For a long time I was under the impression that marriages had to be arranged between families living in different villages. But when I examined the matter statistically I was surprised to find that out of the 2000 marriages scrutinized, there were

Marriages between members of the same ghotul	.. ..	765
Marriages between members of different ghotul	.. ..	1235

Of the 765, between members of the same ghotul, there were

Lamhada (marriage by service)[2]	.. ..	113
Irregular marriages (chêlik marrying their ghotul-wives)	..	77
Betrothed in the ordinary way	.. ..	575

These figures are sufficient to show that there is no official objection to boys and girls who are to marry each other later growing up in the same ghotul. This is significant when we remember that both boy and girl will be regularly cohabiting with others during the betrothal period. But that this does not interfere with their ultimate happiness is shown by the figures for divorce. These are very low, only 59, or under 3 per cent, for the whole tribe, but they rise startlingly in two special cases.

[1] 'The course of a marriage is determined by the wedding night.' With these words Dr R. S. Chesser opens her discussion of the Honeymoon in A. Forbath, *Love, Marriage, Jealousy* (London, 1938), p. 169. The Muria would think that very odd.

[2] Many of the Lamhada boys probably came from different villages, but after beginning their period of service would have had to join the same ghotul as their future wives.

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Type of Marriage	Number of Marriages	Number of Divorces	Percentage of Divorces
Marriage by service ..	113	13	11·50
Marriage with ghotul-wife ..	77	9	11·68
Others marrying in the same ghotul	575	2	0·34
Marriages between members of different ghotul ..	1235	35	2·83

One other figure may be given. Out of the 2000 men questioned 316 admitted that they had had some connexion with their wives *before* marriage, either at a festival or marriage, during a dancing expedition or at a bazaar. Of these 14 or 4·4 per cent were divorced later. This figure, of course, includes the 77 who married their ghotul-wives.

These statistics seem to me important. They suggest in the first place that where the rules of avoidance are properly observed, there is no danger to future happiness in betrothed couples growing up together. That 573 out of 575 of such couples should have made a success of their marriages is very striking. It is equally striking to discover that it is among those very persons who had opportunity for some sort of experimental marriage that the divorce rate is highest. The Lamhada boy, as we see later in this chapter, spends his whole time with his future wife, working with her in the fields and in the house; ghotul mates in the *jodidār* dormitories do not usually share the same home, but they too spend a great deal of time together during the day and sleep together every night—often for five, six or seven years.

These figures throw some light on a problem which has been debated by Havelock Ellis, Westermarck and Briffault among others—whether the happiest marriages are between those who have grown up together or who have met later in life as strangers; a question which, if it could be settled, might throw some light on the origins of exogamy and the reason for the hostility to incest.

'Generally speaking,' says Westermarck, 'there is a remarkable absence of erotic feelings between persons living very closely together from childhood. Nay more, in this, as in many other cases, sexual indifference is combined with the positive feeling of aversion when the act is thought of. This I take to be the fundamental cause of the exogamous prohibitions.' This 'sexual indifference to housemates' he illustrates by an interesting communication from the headmistress of a co-educational school in Finland. 'One youth assured her that neither he nor any of his friends would ever think of marrying a girl who had been their schoolfellow; and I heard of a lad who made a great distinction between girls of his own school and other, "real", girls, as he called them.'[1]

Westermarck quotes the important passage from Havelock Ellis,[2] which I have already used in another connexion, to the effect that 'the normal failure of the pairing instinct to manifest itself in the case of brothers and sisters, or of boys and girls brought up together from infancy, is a merely negative phenomenon due to the inevitable absence under those circumstances of the conditions which evoke the pairing impulse.... Between those who have

[1] Westermarck, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 19ff.
[2] Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Selection in Man*, p. 205.

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837 has to divine who is the guilty party in order that peace may be made and danger averted.

783 Adultery therefore is not only the betrayal of tribal fellowship, the infringement of another's right to property, a breach of sexual tradition, but it is highly dangerous. A sort of public apology has to be made to the betrayed husband and a ceremony of purification performed.

In order to avert their fate, once the matter has become public, the guilty pair go to the Gaita with a pig or goat which he offers to the local deities and the Departed. Then he goes with witnesses to the nearest tank. On a stone he puts two bits of broken earthenware and some dub grass. Everyone present puts one foot on the stone; the Gaita throws water and liquor over the guilty pair who cry, 'Let us not now swell with water. May the Yer Kanyang living in the midst of this water make an end of our sin (*pāp*)'. The seducer then greets the woman's husband and all is forgiven.[1]

X883 A similar ceremony is performed in the *jodidār* ghotul if a chelik goes off with another boy's motiari, or if he sleeps with her in his absence. At Atargaon, 836 where a chelik eloped with another's ghotul-wife, but was brought back after a few days, the ghotul Manjhi took the two 'husbands' out of the village to 783 a place where two paths crossed. He made them stand on either side of the path and put a knife on the ground and above the knife a stone. He made the boys put their right feet on the stone and gave them each seven leaf-cups of water. Seven times they exchanged the cups of water and seven times cups of liquor, and swore to preserve friendship with one another. The seducer promised to pay a heavy fine if it happened again.

X883 There is one type of adultery, however, which does not seem to be taken too seriously. 'Suppose a girl has a ghotul lover.' So they put it at Markabera. 836 'She elopes with him. They are brought back and she is quickly married to her betrothed. After a few weeks she runs away again to her lover. She is again brought back, again accepted by her husband, though he knows she 837 has slept with her old lover. And then she is happy at last and settles down.' 'It is like getting a new cow,' said the chelik at Nayanar. 'She does not at first like her new home. She runs back to the herd and her former pastures. But we don't beat her for that; we are rather doubly kind.'

In dealing with a motiari-wife, that is not only kind; it is intelligent.

VII. Divorce

● 586 Throughout tribal India divorce is easy and generally the wife has the same rights as her husband. Among the Muria divorce on either side is possible, but the stability of their marriage tradition makes it a comparatively rare event. I have already described how divorce can be effected in a *jodidār* ghotul. Similar ceremonies can release a woman from her partner in adult life. These ceremonies, it must be observed, are essentially rites of purification; they are retrospective, having reference to an already existing state of affairs. The actual union with a new partner and the paying of compensation effects the divorce; now husband and wife have to be free, not of each other—for they are that already—but of the dangers that cling to the conduct of one or both.

The ceremonies are the same as those by which a couple taken in adultery are cleared of their fault. Whether the woman returns to her own husband

[1] A similar ceremony is performed to purify a boy who sleeps with a near relative in the ghotul, but in this case a root or cucumber is used instead of a goat for sacrifice.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
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or goes to a new one is not the point. What matters is that there should be no supernatural interference in the even course of the life of the tribe, and no hatred or division between its members. 586

The critical point of a divorce is the repayment of the bride-price. However firmly the old and new husbands may have been bound together by the ceremonies of purification and reconciliation, the old husband will not eat with the new till he gets his money. When he does, they all sit down and feast together at a meal which is also shared by the woman in dispute.

Divorce, however, is rare. The pattern of Muria life, the Muria's attitude to sex, the training of the young in the ghotul, leads generally to happy marriages. I have already given the figures for divorce, but I will tabulate them here.

Number of divorces among people who had	Number	Percentage to total number of relevant cases
Married girl in same ghotul	24	3·13
Married girl in different ghotul ..	35	2·83
Lived in a *jodidār* ghotul	27	3·75
Lived in a 'modern' ghotul	32	2·50
Married their betrothed	49	2·60
Married their ghotul-wives	9	11·68
Lived as Lamhada	13	11·50
Been forced into marriage by a pregnancy	..	..
Total number of divorces in irregular marriages	10	8·62

The reasons for divorce must also be tabulated, though a disappointingly large number of informants failed to give details.

Reasons for divorce	Number
'She ran away' (No reason given)	25
'We quarrelled over work'	3
'She did not like me'	1
'She eloped from her parents' house before coming to me' ..	2
'She was a bitch'	2
'I was ill and she didn't like to stay with me'	1
'We did not like each other'	2
Impotence	2
'I could not satisfy her'—probably *ejaculatio praecox* ..	9
'My elder wife could not stand it when I married a second ..	5
'My elder wife drove out the second'	4
'She was always going off to her parents' house'	1
'She was a thief'	1
'She was of bad character'	1

This table makes it clear that far from divorce depending on the whim of the husband, in the majority of cases it is the wife who takes action; at least

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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586 40 of the divorces were due to the women. To these we might perhaps add another 9 cases where divorce followed a polygynous marriage.

It is noticeable that in no case has childlessness been put forward as a reason for divorce, though I have found this outside the circle of informants examined for statistical purposes. It is also notable that out of 2,000 men only 11 were suffering from some kind of impotence. It is possible to assert this since it is almost axiomatic that divorce should follow impotence. 'As soon as the penis weakens, the vagina runs to the jungle.'

In this particular set of divorces no case of witchcraft is mentioned. But this too I have found elsewhere, and the legends tell how Lingo himself had to drive away five of his seven wives because they were suspected of being witches.

The 25 cases of wives who 'ran away' are probably to be classed as love-affairs. There is no case of a man driving out his wife for adultery. 'A Muria never gets angry with his wife unless with his own eyes he sees her in the arms of another man.' Nor does the Muria husband listen to scandal. 'All the village knows where the cow is at pasture—except the cowherd.'

593 The paucity of material makes a study of divorce difficult. Generally the Muria husband and wife remain together through all vicissitudes. I heard of a beautiful example of fidelity at Bargaon. A former Chalki described how after he had been married a year, his wife's 'privates came out' and he was unable to have intercourse with her. His friends advised him to marry someone else. 'But I considered how she had given me great happiness for that year. How could I leave her then? What would she have done? Who would give her happiness? So I stayed with her, and married no one else, but sometimes visited the ghotul.'

If there is any possible excuse for forgiveness, the Muria forgive a sexual lapse—not because they are complacent but because their philosophy forces them to tolerance. If there is any kind of doubt in an accusation, they give their partner the benefit of it. Through poverty and sorrow, despite the malice of witch and warlock or the mysterious hostility of the unseen gods, through doubt and temptation, heedless of the swift death of beauty and the passing of desire, they stand by one another and in their old age are not without reward. Muria domestic life might well be a model and example to the whole world.

VIII. Jealousy

152 Jealousy, which was defined by Descartes as 'a kind of fear related to a desire to preserve a possession', is generally used in a much wider sense and covers, as Westermarck says, such different emotions as rage at a rival, revenge for stolen property and anguish at the knowledge or suspicion of violated chastity and outraged conjugal affection.[1] Hartland in his study of jealousy among 'savages' considered that the sense of ownership was the seed-plot of jealousy,[2] but Westermarck rightly points out that this is not enough: 'If jealousy has anything to do with the sense of ownership the reason is that it is primarily connected with the desire of possession, which is something different. Moreover sexual jealousy springs from sexual love.' One of the best recent descriptions is by Stekel. Jealousy, he says, is 'the expression of the desire to possess an object wholly. It is primordial, is born with man and dies with him. It is still a tragic characteristic of all people, to be unable

[1] Westermarck, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 300.
[2] E. S. Hartland, *Primitive Paternity* (London, 1910), Vol. II, p. 102.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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girl's first menstruation is marked by special rites of purification. There is little conscious education of the young who grow up in natural freedom and learn by imitation. Marriage is generally adult, but is arranged by the parents and the cross-cousin marriage is common. Betrothal ceremonies are simple. The boy's father goes with gifts and a traditional formula is used—'We have heard there is a flower growing in your garden. We have come to pluck it and put it in our hair'. If a boy's family cannot afford the bride-price required, they may send him to serve as a Lamhada in the house of his future wife. His period of service is for three or five years, and the marriage is often celebrated before it is complete. Marriage by capture, which was probably the traditional method, has not yet died out, and occasionally there is a case of the reverse tradition when a girl comes as a Paitu and forces herself upon a man who is bound to marry her. Widow-remarriage is permitted and indeed enjoined, the husband's younger brother having the first claim on the person and property of the widow. Divorce is rare but is available to either husband or wife. The wife usually achieves it by eloping with another man and the husband in most cases accepts a *fait accompli*.

The actual marriage ceremony is also simple. There is no annointing with turmeric or oil, no perambulation of the sacred pole. Customs vary from place to place, but the traditional marriage has probably only three elements—a celebration which includes feasting, drinking and dancing, the pouring of water from the roof of a house or shed onto the bridal pair and the ceremonial consummmation of the marriage at which bride and bridegroom are forcibly shut up in a room together.

VI

Funeral ceremonies are more elaborate, and since this book is concerned with death, we will consider them in greater detail.

Maria thinking about the destiny and state of the soul after death is as confused as that of more sophisticated people. At least three contradictory views of the subject are held at the same time. I think that the oldest and characteristically

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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was an eater of excreta and urine, and that though he had married her daughter he did not take the least care of her. Hinga, who was apparently a very good husband, was so annoyed at receiving this insult from a woman who should have treated him with respect, especially as the words were shouted at him in the hearing of the village from a distance of about twentyfive paces, that he rushed at her and battered her to death with his axe.

The relationship between a son-in-law and the father of a wife who had betrayed him, was at the bottom of the Aranpur murder of 1941. In 1937 Barse Chewa kept Bandi, daughter of Tati Pandu, a Maria blacksmith, as his wife. For the bride-price he paid a cow with a calf and a basketful of rice. About a year later Chewa's house caught fire, and his elder brother who was then living with them lodged a complaint with the police that Bandi herself had set fire to the building. She was prosecuted, but acquitted. After the disposal of the case against her, Chewa sent the girl back to her parents, and some time afterwards she married a man at Kondasauli. Chewa now went to his original father-in-law Pandu, and demanded a refund of the expense he had incurred in marrying his daughter. Pandu refused to pay anything on the ground that Chewa had turned her out of his house, and that he himself had had to maintain her for two years. He further claimed that any money that could be extracted from the new husband must come to him and not to Chewa. The quarrel went on for some time until at last Chewa grew so exasperated that he went at night to Pandu's house and shot him in the stomach. All Chewa's attempts to exonerate himself and implicate other people were frustrated by the fact that when the blacksmith removed the arrow from his stomach, he was able to recognize it as one which he himself had made for Chewa in his own smithy.

In this case tribal opinion was divided about the question in dispute. The normal rule is that if a woman leaves a husband for another man, he must repay the bride-price (possibly with certain reductions) to the original husband, and that the father of the girl is only entitled to receive money or goods from the first husband and not from his successors. But in this case the question was complicated

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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586 by the fact that Chewa had himself turned the girl out and that between her first and second marriages she had spent two years in her father's house. The matter was thus a difficult one, and was still further complicated by Pandu being a blacksmith who probably did not anticipate fair treatment from the tribal panchayat.

604 There was a very curious and tragic murder when young sixteen-year old Marvi Hunga killed Hirma, a boy three years younger than himself. These two boys were related as uncle and nephew; Hunga's mother was married to the uncle of Hirma's father. This relationship is a privileged one. Just as a grandson may joke with his grandmother, so an uncle may abuse his nephew and even threaten to sleep with his mother, and neither uncle nor nephew is supposed to take any notice of it.

But on this occasion when Hunga met his young nephew Hirma in a field and asked him where he was going, the younger boy abused his uncle's mother and wife saying that he would keep them both as his wives; this annoyed Hunga and he drew his bow and shot the boy with an arrow. The incident apparently had nothing whatever behind it. The boys were not drunk and were on good terms. Hunga seems to have been suddenly, but quite improperly, excited by the abuse given by his nephew, and in a few moments two lives were ruined.

VIII

THE LAMHADA

583 Among the Maria, as in many other parts of tribal India, there is an arrangement whereby youths from poor families who cannot afford the price of a bride can serve for her for three, five or seven years. In Bastar such a youth is known as Lamhada, Lamanai, Lamsena or Gharjamai. The relations between the Lamhada and his future parents-in-law is not always a happy one, and it is complicated by the intimate proximity in which he has to live with the girl to whom he is not yet married. Sometimes, however, especially if the Lamhada happens to make the girl pregnant, the marriage is celebrated before the end of his term of service.

578 583 Only two cases of murder have arisen out of a Lamhada

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

Kuakonda. When Telami Dhurwa returned from jail after killing a man in a drunken quarrel, he offered his clan-god Uru Maru, a pig, a cow and a hen, and had to undergo the usual ceremonies of purification. 783

Apart from these ceremonies, however, the fact that a man has served a sentence for murder has singularly little influence on his social position and domestic happiness. It is true that imprisonment, if it is for a very long term, sometimes acts as an automatic divorce, and women feel that they are at liberty to marry again. But generally wives wait for their husbands to be released, as I found Deve, the wife of Kawasi Borga, waiting for her husband at Doriras. Borga, ten years before, had gone to jail with a life-sentence for killing his uncle. His wife had all the time been well looked after by the villagers, and I found her house substantial and prosperous. Her two sons had been successfully married and were carrying on the business of their home with the help of their wives. 554 558 [584] [593]

People, however, are sometimes afraid to marry a released murderer. Doga of Jabeli must be one of the luckiest young men alive, for after being sentenced to transportation for one murder he was released after three years; whereupon he is said to have killed his wife, was sentenced to death and again got off on appeal. He came to see me armed with a ferocious-looking axe, which had actually been put in evidence at one of his trials as the weapon with which he had committed murder. He was trying to get a new wife, but without success. 'They are all afraid of me', he said, 'for fear I might kill them as well'. But he thought he might possibly get a widow. Another youth who found it very difficult to get a new wife was Hemla Bakka, who killed his wife for committing adultery, and got three years' imprisonment for it. At Aranpur all the girls were frightened of the charming Gutte, who had been in jail for killing a man in a drunken quarrel after a cock-fight. They thought if they displeased him, he might murder them too. 554 582

At Khutepal, Oyami Masa, who was imprisoned for killing his junior wife, seems to have suffered no loss of prestige on account of it. He is a Waddai, and when I was there he 554 558